places the food (phamela) on plates of the size of small basins or dishes (mbenga). We have seen how she distributes it amongst the inhabitants of the village. When all have finished eating, the women wash the plates, put aside the pots which contain the food left for the next morning, and tidy up the yards.

Whatever we may say, the day has been a well-filled one for the women. They are very rarely seen playing in the day time. We shall see how they recuperate themselves in the evening.

II. *Men's occupations.*

As for the men, their life is far from being as active as that of the women. They have not, like their diligent wives, the regular continuous work of preparing the food, not to mention the care of the children. The duties which fall on them, and which they are willing to perform, only require of them isolated efforts from time to time.

As regards *agricultural work*, it is generally believed that men leave this entirely to the women. This is exaggerated. Amongst the Rongas each man possesses his own field which he himself tills, and this is an old custom, a special term even being applied to the field thus tilled: it is called *mpashu*. He may sow seeds in it, but he does not weed it, leaving his wife to do this troublesome work for him and also to reap it. He makes only one exception in the case of the sorghum, of which he consents to go and cut the ears. But he helps his wife in other ways, for instance in the storing of the food; he builds the little huts used as storehouses, prepares the *tjala*, viz., the mat stretched on four poles on which ground nuts are dried in the field, digs holes for the *buhiri*, the shelf at the back of the hut where the basket containing the seeds is placed. His wife does not think him a lazy fellow at all. When the harvest is finished, she takes the smaller cobs of mealies (makunhula), those which will not be kept, or the grains of millet and sorghum which are found on the threshing floor after the threshing, and with them she prepares a special beer to

241 out of the earth with their well filled double pods attached to their extremities.

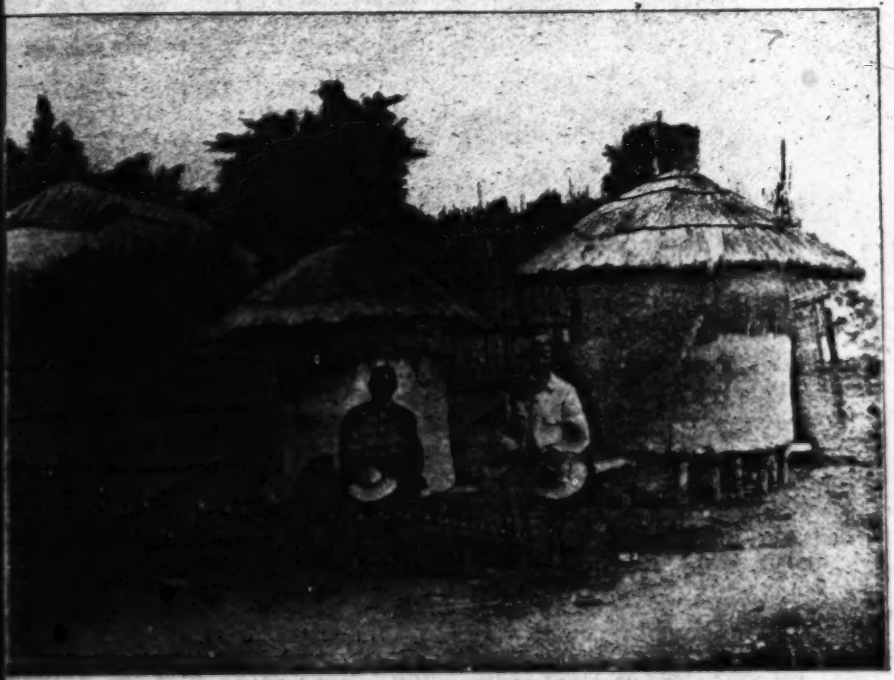
241 The men then construct *drying floors* (tjala, dji-ma) : a mat
251 made of reeds, or of the wood of the palm-tree, is placed in the
343 middle of the field, and supported by four poles ; and on it are
221

The storehouses of Sokis (Rikatla). Phot. H. A. Junod

laid (yaneka) ground-nuts, and peas, to remain there exposed to the sun until they are completely dried.

241 The next operation is the *threshing*, or separating the grain
252 from the ears (hula). This is done with sorghum and Kafir
221 corn, but not with maize, of which the cobs are generally kept entire in the storehouse until wanted. The *hula* is done on a specially prepared threshing floor in the middle of the field. The floor has been hardened by means of nkanye stones, and smeared over with clay. The sorghum and corn stems are brought thither, and the ears are beaten with small sticks. Or the ears are cut, placed in mortars and slightly pounded to liberate the grains. The best have been preserved for seed.

grains. The best have been preserved for seed. When the threshing is finished, the grains are collected (wolela or hlakula) in the *lihlelo* basket and winnowed (hehera). Kafir corn and sorghum are then stored in the big *ngula* basket (1). As regards maize, it is kept in the storehouses proper (shitlanta), 241 251 343 221



Dula storehuts in the Shiluvane village *Phot. H. A. Junod.*
(The man sitting on the right is Viguet, my faithful informant).

little huts built of reeds with a moveable roof and raised on piles. All the shitlanta belong to the husband, though most of the tilling and all the weeding has been done by the wife, as already explained (I. p. 337). In the Transvaal, beans, peas and ground nuts are packed in the *dula* (dji-ma), which are smeared outside with clay, [423] 343

(1) It is taboo to weave the *ngula* before harvest, just as it is to prepare the *ntsubo* before the birth of the baby. Before harvest Kafir corn is still *nyimba*, viz., a child not yet born. Who knows if the hail or the locusts will not destroy it? Wait till you have harvested, then you will see what size your basket must be! 241